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ABSTRACT

This monograph focuses on beginning principals and the changes Oregon school districts are making in the induction process of new principals. Chapter 1 summarizes current research and theories that describe the socialization process of newcomers and the problems of becoming a school leader. Chapter 2 examines the current induction process. Chapter 3 presents examples of promising programs and activities that may help administrators exert effective leadership. Chapter 4 highlights the induction strategies that two Oregon districts (North Clackamas and Beaverton) use to induct principals. Chapter 5 examines induction programs in medium and small school systems and features a collegial observation and support program coordinated by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in which the Sandy, Estacada, and Reynolds School Districts involve their principals. The final chapter summarizes effective induction activities and offers recommendations for improvement. Appended are 30 references and a list of 26 persons who were interviewed. (SI)

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INDUCTING PRINCIPALS

How School Districts Help Beginners Succeed

Mark E. Anderson

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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OREGON SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL

1787 Agate Street
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403
(503) 686-5045

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Preface

The Oregon School Study Council ended the 1987-88 school year with a publication entitled *Hiring Capable Principals: How School Districts Recruit, Groom, and Select the Best Candidates*. In that Bulletin, author Mark E. Anderson argued that recruiting and selecting capable school principals was one key to ensuring excellence in American schools.

Recruitment and selection, though important, are only half the answer to developing outstanding school leaders who can lead our nation's schools into the 21st Century; the other half is providing new hirees with a well-organized set of postselection activities to assist in the continued professional development of principals. Because the normal practice in many school districts is simply to give newly hired principals a key to the building and, in effect, tell them to sink or swim on their own, mounting evidence indicates this "sink or swim" induction method inhibits beginning principals' effectiveness. In fact, such induction strategies may merely perpetuate ineffective school practices and deter new principals from suggesting new ideas to school systems faced with many old problems.

Although recent research on the induction of principals is somewhat discouraging, an encouraging sign—documented in the following pages—is that some districts are making efforts to provide newly hired principals with well-organized postselection support. This Bulletin presents current research about the beginning principal and describes efforts in several Oregon districts that are beginning to meet the needs of rookie principals.

Anderson, a member of the OSSC staff, has been a principal for the past ten years in Washington State and is currently a doctoral candidate in the Division of Educational Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Anderson's doctoral dissertation will focus on the experiences of beginning principals in Washington and Oregon and the types of induction support that improves newcomers' effectiveness.

Philip K. Piele
Executive Secretary

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Introduction

> All of the principals in the United States, assembled together, would just fill the Rose Bowl. This is an unlikely assemblage, to be sure, but one that illustrates the importance of principals as members of a relatively small cadre of school leaders who can define and promote educational excellence. (Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education)

Nearly 60 percent of this cadre of important school leaders will retire during the 1990s. Thus, we will undoubtedly witness a dramatic turnover in the men and women who occupy the critical role of school principal. This fact presents school districts with a unique opportunity to hire and induct many talented new principals who can promote and lead efforts to build excellent schools throughout our nation. As John Daresh (April 1987a) suggests, the upcoming influx of newcomers to the field of school administration will provide school systems with "some tremendous opportunities to find new people who might begin the process of suggesting new ideas and new solutions to systems faced with many old problems."

Unfortunately, the processes that school districts use to induct or socialize American principals to their role are often ill-suited to the development of exemplary and innovative leaders. Daniel Duke (1987) contends that exemplary principals are "the exception and that they will remain exceptions until changes occur in schools and school systems." If Duke could have his way, contemporary educational leaders would give "serious thought to altering the socialization process so that instructional leadership is nurtured and rewarded."

The first year of the principalship is critical to shaping school leaders, and the process that school districts use to induct rookie administrators has a profound impact on their attitudes, behaviors, and effectiveness. Even a cursory review of the literature on principals reveals, however, that a "sink or swim" induction process is characteristic of how most school districts orient beginning principals. Senior school administrators often do not provide the kind of well-thought-out induction and postselection developmental activities that inexperienced principals

need to become effective school leaders.

It is clear that school districts must make significant changes in the induction process of new principals so they can quickly begin leading, as opposed to just surviving or maintaining the status quo. This Bulletin, therefore, focuses on beginning principals, those individuals who face an incredibly complex and important job for the first time. In chapter 1, a summary of current research and theories describes the socialization process of newcomers and the problems of becoming a capable school leader.

Chapter 2 examines the experiences of new principals and problems within the current induction process of many school systems. Chapter 3 presents examples of promising programs and activities that may help rookie administrators more quickly exert effective leadership. Chapter 4 highlights the induction strategies that two larger Oregon districts—North Clackamas and Beaverton—use to induct principals. Chapter 5 describes how a medium size and a smaller school system—David Douglas and Estacada, respectively—support beginning principals. In addition, chapter 5 features a collegial observation and support program coordinated by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in which the Sandy and Estacada School Districts involve their principals. The final chapter summarizes effective induction activities and offers recommendations to those districts that want to improve the process by which they support new principals and introduce them to their important school leadership role.

I am indebted to many administrators in the Beaverton, David Douglas, Estacada, North Clackamas, and Sandy schools for sharing their time and insights into effective strategies to induct principals. These administrators willingly spent time with me during a hectic period for administrators, the start of school. Without their openness and candor, I would not have gained many of the specific ideas that are shared in this Bulletin.

Chapter 1

The Challenges of Becoming a Capable School Leader

Are men and women who become outstanding school leaders born, not made? Most modern researchers, stressing nurture over nature, believe that major competencies of leadership can be learned. Nevertheless, school administrators and trainers of administrators have grappled for some time with identifying effective methods to prepare individuals to be successful principals. According to Daniel Duke (1987), school leaders often do not emerge from university training programs fully prepared and completely effective. As much as anything else, Duke contends, becoming a school leader is an ongoing process of socialization.

> It encompasses personal experiences in school settings, formal job orientations, college and university courses, interaction with mentors and superiors, and a variety of other occasions during which aspiring school leaders learn the norms and expectations of their profession and of the organization in which they will practice. There is every reason to believe that the eventual effectiveness of every school leader is tied, at least in part, to their experiences during this socialization process.

What is of special interest to us in this chapter are those aspects of the preservice socialization process that inhibit or discourage the development of capable school principals. This chapter begins with an overview of the socialization process and its various effects on individuals, and then turns to describing current practices and problems in the preservice induction of principals.

The Socialization Process

Of all the various theories that exist to help us understand how people acquire certain attitudes and expectations of a professional role, socialization

theory seems to reveal the greatest insights into the important dimensions of becoming a school leader. George Theodorson and Achilles Theodorson (1979) define *socialization* as the process "through which an individual becomes integrated into a social group by learning the group's culture and his role in the group." Sociological literature also suggests that newcomers learn to behave in their new organizational settings through three phases of induction—anticipatory, occupational, and organizational socialization.

Anticipatory Socialization

The anticipatory phase of the induction process involves the "learning of the rights, obligations, expectations, and outlooks of a social role *preparatory* to assuming it," according to the Theodorsons. Time spent as teachers, observing and working with school principals, certainly contributes to the anticipatory socialization process of aspiring administrators. University training also plays an important part in helping aspirants develop an understanding of the expectations and obligations of the principalship.

Occupational Socialization

This second phase of induction, Arthur Blumberg (1980) writes, concerns the "process by which persons learn and perform according to the norms, values, and behaviors held to be necessary for performing a particular professional role." Once a person decides on pursuing a career in school administration, university programs and practica play a major role in training and socializing aspiring principals in the technical aspects of school administration and the required behaviors to fulfill the role of principal. Some theorists even argue that occupational socialization is merely a form of the anticipatory socialization process for preparing individuals to assume an organizational role.

Organizational Socialization

The third phase of induction involves the transmission of values, attitudes, and beliefs of members of an organization to newcomers. As Manuel London (1985) defines it, "Organizational socialization is the process by which an employee learns the values, norms, and required behaviors that permit participation as a member of an organization."

Organizational socialization consists of both formal and informal processes by which people "learn the ropes" in a particular school system. According to Duke, "Formal processes include recruitment and selection, orientation, and performance evaluations. Informal processes range from chance encounters with veteran members of the organization to mentoring relationships."

Organizational socialization, therefore, varies among school systems. One district's values, norms, and expected behaviors of principals may be

quite different from another school system's. Thus, newly hired principals' attitudes and actions are influenced in different ways, depending upon the particular school system in which they become a principal. Blumberg even suggests that each time a person changes jobs, leaving one organization to join another, organizational socialization reoccurs.

Chapter 2 examines the experiences of beginning principals and problems within school systems' current organizational socialization processes. First, however, it is helpful to look at some of the problems in preservice socialization or induction, specifically, anticipatory and occupational induction.

Preservice Induction Problems

"This job isn't at all what I expected it would be like." Such statements, or unspoken thoughts, are common to many individuals new to a job. Everett Hughes (1958) has likened the plight of newcomers to a form of "reality shock," where individuals experience "surprises" that arise from differences in their "anticipatory socialization" (what they thought or were told the job would be like) and their actual experiences in the new setting.

From reports of principals about their first year on the job, the "shock of entry" is common among most rookie administrators. Part of the problem lies in the anticipatory and occupational induction process of principals. In a classic study of teachers, Dan Lortie (1975) identified three stages of occupational induction that are applicable to principals as well: (1) formal schooling, (2) mediated entry, and (3) learning-while-doing. All these stages are currently problematic in becoming a capable and exceptional school leader.

Problems in Formal Schooling

Formal preparation of school principals usually consists of thirty hours of postbaccalaureate work at a university. For many years principals have voiced dissatisfaction with the utility of university training in adequately preparing them for the realities of the principalship. A 1968 survey of principals found that fewer than 2 percent of elementary principals credited their success as school administrators to their undergraduate course work (Department of Elementary Principals, National Education Association, 1968).

Recent reports show that principals' sentiments toward their preservice training have not changed significantly. Summarizing the state of affairs in a 1983 policy report, the Southern Regional Education Board (see Lynn Cornett) stated that principals' overriding complaint about university training programs is that they are "too theoretical, and do not provide the necessary training to deal with the job."

Besides being too theoretical, university programs may also kindle an exaggerated conception of the potency of leadership that results in rookies experiencing "reality shock" when they actually try to exert leadership. According to Edwin Bridges (1977), the academic community often does not provide aspiring administrators with an appropriate understanding of the problematic character of a leader's influence and, therefore, intensifies, rather than moderates, "the leadership fantasies of its audience." Bridges' indictment includes the following failures in universities' preservice socialization of school leaders:

- Graduate programs encourage prospective leaders to overestimate their potential influence.
- Graduate programs do not prepare prospective leaders to cope with success or deal with disappointment.
- Graduate programs prepare prospective leaders to be "thinkers" rather than "doers."
- Graduate programs ignore the value of intuition, despite the fact that intuition may be critical to a leader's success.
- Graduate programs predispose leaders to avoid conflicts rather than teach them how to collaborate to resolve conflict.
- Graduate programs stress written skills despite the fact that leaders function in a "verbal" world.
- Graduate programs emphasize rational behavior, while effective leaders often must rely on their emotions.

The Inadequacies of Mediated Entry

The second stage of preservice socialization, mediated entry, may involve practica and internships where prospective principals have a chance to try their hands at real-life school administration. Unlike teachers who experience a form of mediated entry—practice teaching—many aspiring principals report having no specific internship or practica experiences (Peterson 1985 and Cornett 1983). Even when aspirants engage in such activities, appropriate training and socialization often do not occur.

John Daresh (October 1987) contends that school districts' failure to grant release time for aspiring administrators is a significant roadblock to effective training experiences. He states that most internships and practica experiences usually consist of

> synthetic situations where aspiring principals, in most cases full-time teachers unable to get district support and approval for release time, find some quasi-administrative tasks that can be performed during the time that is not assigned during the school day to teaching or other duties. As a result, people are being prepared to serve as instructional leaders by spending five to ten hours per week supervising bus loading, calling the homes of truant

students, filling out forms for the central office or the state department of education, or devising new student handbooks. These activities are, no doubt, useful for the smooth operation of a school, and many practicing administrators are engaged in these activities every day. However, to rely on projects such as these to give anyone a clear picture of the multifaceted nature of most principals' jobs is truly ludicrous.

When I interviewed Gary Salyers, president elect of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and a principal in the North Clackamas School District in Oregon, he said that "principals have a responsibility to farm out some of their responsibilities to start helping aspiring principals" try their hands at meaningful leadership experiences before they are thrust into the job. Salyers gives aspirants in his building a variety of leadership experiences, and "I hire a substitute to cover their classroom while they do principal responsibilities."

Many principals and school systems, however, do not provide appropriate training experiences for prospective principals. In contrast to the mediated entry of principals, other occupations require long formal apprenticeships such as clerkships in law firms, internships and residences in medicine, and extensive management training programs in business to train and socialize aspirants for their specific organizational role (Lortie 1975). Compared with those in other professions, arrangements for mediated entry in school administration are primitive.

A 1978 NAESP survey indicated that most principals credit their teaching experience as one of the most helpful activities in preparing them for becoming a school leader. Does teaching provide valuable induction experiences for prospective principals that helps orient them to the realities of school leadership?

Impact of Teaching Experience

Duke, citing Seymour Sarason's opinion of the teaching experience as an effective socialization strategy for preparing individuals for the principal's role, suggests that "being a leader of children does not necessarily prepare a person to be a leader of adults." Teachers are usually "loners" who rarely "feel part of a working group that discusses, plans, and helps make educational decisions." Working in isolation causes teachers to absorb and accept cultural norms of individuality and the status quo.

Duke goes on to point out that the ranks of teachers do not appear likely to yield large numbers of school leaders who are able to "work well with adults, and capable of seeing school-wide needs." When teachers do seek to become school leaders, "the aspects of school leadership that may attract them most may be the autonomy of the job and its status, not its potential for producing change," Duke writes.

As troubling as all this might sound, an encouraging sign is that several districts and universities are beginning to work in cooperation to

make the necessary changes in preservice training that may improve the socialization process for prospective principals before they assume a position. My own research in Oregon found several districts that are making the necessary investments to train and provide aspiring principals with meaningful experiences that give them a more realistic view of leadership before they assume their first principal position.

In addition to school and university efforts, professional associations are beginning to focus on improving the preservice socialization of principals. "Because we are going to be replacing half of the principals in this country during the next five to eight years, it poses not only a challenge for school districts, but for our association as well," says Salyers, NAESP president elect. One of the ways NAESP is attempting to meet this challenge is that "we are developing a series of programs related to the aspiring principals," Salyers notes. These programs, "geared toward teachers who would like to become principals," will be offered throughout the country beginning in the summer of 1989.

While improvements in the preservice socialization of principals are important and encouraging, Duke concludes that "it still can be argued that the preparation of school leaders is far from ideal." As a result of current preservice induction processes, most principals are ill-prepared for the job upon beginning work. Moreover, they are usually "shocked" at the problematic nature of leading a school. The failure of preservice induction puts new principals in a position where all their eggs are in one basket—learning-while-doing—the third stage of occupational induction. Unfortunately, as we will see in the next chapter, learning on the job is not an easy task for rookie administrators.

Chapter 2

The Experiences of Beginning Principals

"Learning-while-doing" is the third stage of occupational induction, and, from the reports of principals, most of their "real learning" occurs on the job (NAESP 1978). Kent Peterson (1985) suggests, however, that learning on the job may be difficult for principals, for the following reasons:

1. Principals' preference for action in solving problems works against reflective self-assessment and learning.
2. Infrequent formal opportunities to share experiences with colleagues inhibit peer learning and prevent principals from capitalizing on a store house of experience.
3. Professional growth and measurement of progress are hindered by feed back that is nonspecific and abstract.

Recent descriptive studies of beginning principals reveal that rookie administrators experience many of these on-the-job learning problems due, in part, to school districts' induction methods. These studies document that beginning principals experience a great amount of frustration, anxiety, confusion, and a sense of being inadequately prepared for what they actually encounter once on the job. With this in mind, what are the surprises, frustrations, and problems that principals new to a school system face and what occurs as a result? The following sections examine problems in the areas of role clarification, guidance in the technical aspects of the job, organizational socialization, isolation, and feedback about performance.

Role Clarification

Many beginning principals report that they got off to a rather rocky start because they did not understand why they were selected or what school officials expected of them. After completing a study of beginning

principals in the Midwest, Daresh (April 1987b) concluded that "a real and persistent problem faced by beginning school administrators involved the ability to comprehend the precise nature of the new position." In his study of beginning administrators in the Northwest, Robert Nelson (1986) found a similar sense of confusion among beginners concerning their role. Rookies, Nelson reports, felt "their selection was not 'clean'" and there was a nagging sense of not knowing why they were hired.

The recruitment, screening, and selection of persons for positions of school leadership are important opportunities for school systems to expose candidates to local norms, expectations, and organizational mission. Ideally, one result of the selection process is an affirmation of the skills and knowledge that a successful candidate possesses. And, as Catherine Baltzell and Robert Dentler argue (1983), "Principals often draw their sense of mission in significant degree from their selection experience."

Unfortunately, in many school systems, the interview and selection process presents a disconcerting orientation for candidates. From their national study of the principal selection process, Baltzell and Dentler concluded that the means by which American school principals are selected are "ridden with chance" and are often based on localistic notions of fit and image, rather than on merit and professional competence. This situation has particular disadvantages for women and minority candidates when the "fit" image is usually a tall, white, male principal pushing middle age.

School districts can improve this first phase of the organizational socialization process by developing specific selection criteria that clearly define the expectations and qualifications for the role of principal in a district. Then, districts must use sophisticated screening and interviewing techniques to select the best candidate. Finally, districts would be well advised to share with the successful candidates the specific reasons for their selection and why their skills match the needs of the schools in which they will begin work. By providing such steps in the selection process, school systems will assist beginning principals to quickly develop a sense of commitment to the goals of the school and district, a sense of organizational mission, and a feeling of personal efficacy.

Technical Problems

Learning the technical aspects of the job is a second problem that many new principals face. Beginning administrators report a wide variety of concerns in the technical or procedural area. After some brief orientations, most school districts simply give new principals the keys and, in effect, say "sink or swim, you're on your own." Because they receive little help from hiring officials and colleagues, beginning principals spend the majority of their time learning how to perform many mundane, yet important, school system-specific procedures that have little to do with instructional leadership,

but that are important for the smooth operation of the school. For example, new principals grapple with such concerns as how to read computer printouts provided by the district business office; how to set up for assemblies and lunch; how to address various legal issues; how to operate the bells, clocks, and fire alarms; and how to get a work order processed.

After completing his study of beginning principals, Daresh (April 1987b) concluded, "If any one area of beginning administrator concerns could be classified as most powerful, this area of perceived lack of technical expertise related to how to follow established procedures was it." According to Lortie, "sink or swim" induction tactics are not the norm in many other occupations. "Business, building crafts, and highly skilled trades require formal apprenticeships where the neophyte is ushered through a series of tasks of ascending difficulty and assumes greater responsibility as his technical competence increases." Principals' learning, however, is random as opposed to sequential, and they must quickly scale a very steep learning curve.

Organizational Socialization to the School System

A third area of concern for new principals, probably the most troublesome, is "how to act and how to get things done" in the particular school system in which they begin work—organizational socialization. Nelson found that rookies were eventually able to learn the "logistics"; however, what was far more difficult to learn "were the strategies which the organization regarded as appropriate to the roles they assumed and the social relations in the organization."

Beginning principals in Daresh's (April 1987b) study experienced similar organizational socialization problems. For example, one principal told Daresh he felt rather foolish after following the procedures outlined in the school board policy manual regarding requests for new equipment for his building. Stated policy required that a formal application by the principal be filed with the assistant superintendent in charge of administrative services. After not getting any action on the piece of equipment that he ordered, he found out that the "real" way things like that happened in his school system was for the principal to deal directly with the director of buildings and grounds and not bother the assistant superintendent who, after all, was too busy dealing with other matters that were not listed as his responsibility in the policy manual. Daresh notes:

> The new principal discovered this discrepancy between stated policy and real procedure only after talking to another, more experienced principal, who noted that the request for equipment would probably only gather dust "in somebody's in-basket" and would never be acted upon if "normal channels" were followed.

"Learning the ropes," both the political and the social, of a particular district can be difficult for newly hired principals. Many important pieces of information about school system operations are unwritten and are carried around in the minds of veteran administrators. Thus, rookies must depend on others for "getting into the know."

New principals depend on different strategies, such as observing experienced principals, to obtain needed insights into the unwritten rules of the road. Unfortunately, beginners are often unable to observe veterans because they are physically isolated from other administrators or they believe veterans are not good role models.

Communication with other principals is another strategy beginners can use to obtain needed information, but Nelson found that districts in his study did not facilitate needed interactions among administrators. Left on their own and not wanting to appear incompetent in the eyes of their more experienced colleagues, some newcomers sought advice from individuals outside the school system. Nelson found, however, that these discussions "did not present the organization-specific information that the newcomers sought."

Isolation

For beginning principals, the extreme isolation of the principalship is a fourth major problem. According to John Van Maanen and Edgar Schein (1979), authors of a landmark theory on organizational socialization, isolating newcomers is an induction tactic that may encourage "disloyalty to the role, group, organizational segment, or total organization." In addition, beginning administrators, isolated and without guidance, often make mistakes that may have consequences weeks or months later.

Nelson found a common sense of isolation among newcomers in the districts that he investigated. Although some administrators had previously worked in collaborative environments, there was "little opportunity to collaborate in their new position." Others, while not having come from a collaborative environment, told Nelson they "looked to administration as providing the autonomy to seek out collaborative opportunities with other administrators." Unfortunately, they also found little opportunity for working with other colleagues.

Daresh (1987b) documented similar feelings of isolation and lack of collegial support among principals he studied in the Midwest. He concluded:

> The non-existence of collegial support on the job is indeed a negative aspect of how things tend to happen in most school districts. Ways need to be found to ensure that, whenever possible, new administrators are not left totally alone to solve problems in isolation from their colleagues.

Lack of Feedback

A fifth area of concern among beginning principals is lack of feedback on how they are doing. According to London, feedback about performance and discussions of organizational mission all have a significant impact on the ways a neophyte develops commitment to the system, on his or her sense of personal efficacy, and on loyalty to the goals and values of the organization. Constructive and specific feedback can also help newcomers improve their knowledge about the principal's role and improve their leadership skills and actions.

Performance evaluations by superiors may provide feedback and guidance to newly hired principals. Unfortunately, many beginners report such performance feedback is infrequent and, when done, not specific or helpful. Nelson found that most beginning administrators he interviewed "wished that they received more specific feedback from their superiors about their job performance. But formal feedback was rarely given."

Daresh (April 1987b) reports similar concerns among beginning principals with whom he spoke.

> They never knew if they were really doing what was considered to be a good job, and no one in their schools or districts appeared inclined to provide much feedback or direction to help them understand how they were doing. This lack of feedback was an issue that principals felt from every level of the organization—superiors, peers, and subordinates.

Lack of feedback contributes to new principals being tentative, indecisive, and anxious. It is clear that beginning principal performance may certainly be improved with specific feedback, encouragement, and guidance from successful and experienced administrators in or outside of a school system.

The current studies begin to point out some commonly recognized concerns among newcomers. Senior administrators can use these concerns to assess whether similar difficulties for newcomers are present in their district that result from school system induction methods. From my own conversations with rookie principals in Washington and Oregon, the experiences of first-year administrators in the Daresh and Nelson studies are not unusual. In fact, they ring a "familiar bell."

Given the problems of role clarification, lack of technical guidance and socialization to the school system, isolation, and inadequate feedback, what training activities might help new principals to better lead their schools? Some promising programs do exist.

Chapter 3

Promising Programs to Help Beginning Principals

> What emerges from practice and research is paradoxical; principals' most valuable source of learning is their on-the-job experience, yet the reality of that experience is seriously limited as a vehicle for learning. Clearly, principals need systematic strategies for learning from their on-the-job reality by recognizing and overcoming its constraints. They need to see how constraints may be converted into opportunities for leadership. (Stanley Schainker and LaRaine Roberts 1987)

To help beginning principals overcome the constraints of on-the-job learning, educators are beginning to recognize that school districts can no longer afford to leave beginning principals alone to solve complex school problems, isolated from helpful and successful colleagues. Thus, several institutions have begun the development of promising programs that can assist beginning principals.

Peer-Assisted Leadership

In fall 1983, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development began Peer-Assisted Leadership (PAL), a unique professional development activity that enables school principals to analyze their own leadership behavior and that of a peer partner in a nonprescriptive and nonjudgmental manner. During a year-long process, principals learn and apply various skills for collecting data about their partners and sharing that information with them in a useful way.

In describing the program, Bruce Barnett (1985) states that the PAL training consists of a series of six full-day meetings (at intervals of about six weeks) with trainers from the Instructional Management Program of the Far West Lab. During those meetings, participants learn various skills

for gathering and analyzing information: shadowing techniques to observe their peer partner, reflective interviewing, advanced reflective interviewing and theme building, clustering data by themes, final model production, and model presentations. Between meetings, Barnett reports, principals apply the skills in carrying out observations and interviews that provide data about their partner and their partners' schools. By the last meeting, principals are prepared to present models of their partners' instructional leadership activities to the whole group.

As a result of the PAL process, participating principals indicate that they benefit from working with other principals and that they practice more self-reflection, a process found useful in helping them run their schools. Principals also report that they receive many new and helpful ideas from their partners about how to handle particular problems they encounter. Since PAL's inception, several districts have involved principals in the program. When I interviewed Ginny Lee, PAL trainer, she said the San Diego School District has used the Peer-Assisted Leadership program as part of its induction program for beginning principals. In San Diego, veteran principals are paired with rookies, and the partners implement PAL techniques in assisting each other on school-specific leadership concerns.

Lee (1988) reports that Far West Lab has developed a training-of-trainers component to the program to increase the number of administrators who can participate. Bruce Barnett and Faye Mueller (1987), in a study of the long-term effects of the PAL training on principals, found that collegial observation and feedback have lasting, positive effects on participating principals. Structured opportunities for greater collegial support, such as PAL, can help address many of the problems, frustrations, and concerns of beginning principals, namely isolation and lack of feedback. The benefits of the PAL process for Oregon principals who have participated in the program are described in chapter 5.

Principals Inservice Program

A program that has a similar emphasis on collegial support is the Principals Inservice Program developed in 1979 by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities (/I/D/E/A/). James LaPlant (1979), director of the project, suggests that most

> inservice education for principals can be characterized as a smorgasbord of opportunities splattered on the school house wall in a way which leaves principals trying to decide if the wall is part of a large mural, a piece of abstract art, or perhaps an unwanted act of vandalism.

To counter the typical methodology of exposing principals to a "bag of tricks" in a one-shot inservice session, /I/D/E/A/ developed its program to assist principals in establishing "long-term" collegial support groups to

provide school-specific improvement. These groups, each headed by an /I/D/E/A/-trained facilitator, are usually composed of six-to-ten principals who meet monthly over a two-year period.

The goal of the program is to help principals improve their professional competence in leading school programs that will help children learn. To that end, principals meet as a group to openly explore problems in their schools that demand solutions. LaPlant states, "In a climate of openness, trust, and mutual assistance, principals become resources for ideas and peer reviews in their professional development and school improvement efforts." Outcomes of the program are as follows:

- *Personal Professional Development.* The principal, as a member of a collegial support group, designs, implements, and evaluates a personal and professional development plan to increase his or her leadership capa bility.
- *School Improvement.* The principal, as a member of a collegial support group, designs, implements, and evaluates a school improvement project to address an identified need within the school.
- *Collegial Support Group.* Members of the collegial support group provide assistance and encouragement to one another as they engage in their professional development and school improvement efforts.
- *Continuous Improvement.* The principal accepts responsibility for the achievement of personal and professional development and school improvement goals.

In a study of participants in the /I/D/E/A/ program, Daresh (1982) concluded that collegial support is a sound practice with tremendous potential for improving the quality of inservice support available for local school principals:

> Particularly for beginning principals, the collegial support group concept allows administrators to work cooperatively to propose solutions for numerous daily problems and, even more important, to escape from the need to devote all their time and energy to daily managerial issues and tasks. Thus, principals are free to exercise a more creative approach to problem solving and may, over time, engage in the often illusive role of instructional leaders of their schools.

The /I/D/E/A/ program has become very popular among principals. According to Karen Fearing, administrative assistant at /I/D/E/A/, the Principals Inservice Program has expanded since its inception in 1978 to include 300 facilitators leading collegial support groups involving more than 3,000 principals from 28 states and 3 foreign countries. Collegial programs like PAL and Principals Inservice Program are just the type of support beginning principals need.

Professional Associations Assist Beginners

Professional associations of principals can also play an important role in helping new principals succeed, understand the right questions to ask during their first year, and expose newcomers to savvy and successful veteran principals. An example of how one principals' association assists beginning principals is a conference hosted and coordinated by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP).

According to Charles Talmage, executive director of AWSP, principal associations have a responsibility to help beginning principals get off to a good start. In Washington, AWSP leaders and veteran principals organize a two-day summer conference for new principals that precedes their first year on the job. Areas covered during the conference include the following topics:

- Working with and supporting the school district's superintendent
- Developing a successful relationship with the central office
- Administrative plan for positive staff evaluation
- Positive aspects of the building budget
- How to be successful in relationships with parents
- A process for dealing with emergencies, tragedies, and legal concerns
- Separation of who you are from what you do

According to an AWSP bulletin (1988), the overwhelming reaction of those attending the conference is summed up by the comment expressed on one of the conference evaluations: "Great job! The information was just what I needed to get started on the right foot."

Although professional associations and programs like those developed by Far West lab and /I/D/E/A/ can play an important part in assisting beginners, individual school districts are the key to appropriately orienting new principals. School districts must take the initiative to provide beginning principals with a variety of well-thought-out and helpful induction activities. Joseph Rogus and William Drury (1988) have designed a framework for school districts to use in developing a principal induction plan.

Model for Principal Induction

Rogus and Drury's induction model is one that school systems can use to improve first-year administrators' performance, increase the retention rate of beginning administrators, and develop an "esprit de corps" among a school district's administrative staff. Specific program goals are listed in figure 1.

Figure 1
Induction Program Purposes

Induction program participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understandings of system expectations, procedures, and resources.
2. Demonstrate increased competence and comfort in addressing building or unit outcomes or concerns.
3. Enhance their personal/professional growth.
4. Develop a personal support system.
5. Receive personalized assistance in coping with building/unit problems.
6. Receive formative feedback and assistance toward strengthening their administrative performance.

Source: Rogus and Drury (1988).

To put these goals into action, Rogus and Drury designed three components for implementing an induction program: large-group, small group,and mentoring. Figure 2 shows how these three essential components help participants achieve the six listed goals of the authors' induction model.

The Large-Group Component

Activities in the large-group setting are designed to focus on the concerns, problems, and issues that district staff and administrative participants identify. Rogus and Drury state, "While it is important that participants understand the expectations of the district, it is equally important that they receive help on the issues and concerns they view as significant." The large group can also serve as an effective setting for development of professional growth plans, they say.

The Small-Group Component

Small groups serve as a vehicle for providing individual assistance with implementation of personal growth plans. A district can also use this group to help beginning principals address building or unit problems, similar to the collegial support groups in the /I/D/E/A/ program.

Figure 2
Program Structure and Essential Program Elements

Large Group	*Small Group*	*Mentoring*
1. Presentations with respect to content/ process needs identified by program participants (2)	1. Group support sessions with a problem-solving emphasis (4)	1. Individual helping relationship with respect to building/unit management concerns (5)
2. Presentations with respect to system expectations, procedures, and resources (1)	2. Group support for implementing plan (3,4)	2. Provision of formative feedback personal growth on administrative performance (6)
3. Development of personal/professional growth plans (3)		3. Individual support for implementing personal growth plan (3)

Numbers in parentheses signify the program goals (listed in figure 1) to which program elements are keyed.

Source: Rogus and Drury (1988).

Rogus and Drury note that "each small group is composed of five or six administrators in similar job positions. Members of the group divide into pairs and share growth outcomes and action steps on a regular basis." For problem-solving purposes, the six-member group works as a team in sharing and solving problems that new principals face.

The Mentoring Component

In this part of the induction program, veteran administrators are paired with beginners in a sort of "buddy" system. According to Rogus and Drury, "mentors tend to be effective if they choose to serve as mentors, are effective in their work, are recognized as being successful, and are trained for the role." Because of the complexity of the mentoring relationship, Rogus and Drury advise that senior officials carefully match mentors with mentees.

Mentors meet with their partners on a regular basis to provide support and assistance with respect to problems the mentee is encountering. The mentors also provide assistance to the mentee in carrying out a personal growth plan, provide feedback on administrative performance, and help the rookie principal focus not only on immediate concerns but on questions "that transcend the urgencies which normally dominate first-year administrator thinking." In a sense, Rogus and Drury write, "the mentor's task is to help the mentee . . . develop a clear vision of what the organization might become" and to reflect on his or her leadership actions.

The three-pronged principal induction program that Rogus and Drury designed provides school districts with a framework for communicating to new principals the expectations of the district. As the authors suggest, it can encourage support among status equals.

> It allows for clinical support, coaching, and corrective feedback by practitioners; and it diffuses responsibility for providing corrective feedback, training, and support. The programs can also serve as a helpful mechanism for recruiting and selecting new members.

As we shall see in the next chapters, some Oregon school district induction strategies have many program elements similar to those listed in the Rogus and Drury model.

Chapter 4

The Induction Strategies of Two Large Oregon Districts

> So many times new principals are simply given a key and told to run a building without help on an ongoing basis. What happens, unfortunately, is that new people get tied into things like making sure reports are turned in on time and keeping the central office happy. When new principals get locked into doing only those types of activities, they do not focus energy on the other kinds of things that principals should pay attention to—that is, the instructional program, student learning, and what it takes in relation to keeping teachers on track.
>
> It is important, therefore, that a veteran principal who has excellent leadership skills is matched up with a rookie so he or she can help the new person get tied into the kinds of activities that are important. (Wayne Robbins, associate director of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators)

In Oregon, the challenge of inducting new principals is similar to the challenge facing other states. Approximately half of all Oregon principals will retire in the next five to seven years, according to Robbins. This fact certainly presents a tremendous opportunity for Oregon districts to support new principals and help them quickly exert effective leadership.

Several Oregon school districts are indeed responding to the challenge of helping beginning principals focus their efforts on leading their schools. To give some examples of those efforts, this chapter looks at the induction strategies employed in two larger Oregon school districts—North Clackamas and Beaverton.

As the previous chapter shows, pairing rookie administrators with successful veteran administrators is a promising strategy for helping new principals exert effective leadership. In addition, as Rogus and Drury suggest, districts should use large- and small-group training sessions to orient beginners to the districts' missions and values and to help new principals solve building-specific problems with assistance from wise

colleagues. An induction system that has many of these program elements operates in the North Clackamas schools.

North Clackamas's Principal Induction System

In 1984 the North Clackamas School District (1988-89 enrollment approximately 11,600 students in 24 schools) began its efforts to improve the induction process of principals. According to Superintendent Ben Schellenberg, "The principal makes all the difference in a school in terms of the learning that takes place, school environment, and the direction of a school. Principals are going to make it or break it for us." Because a principal's job is so important and complex, "we want to make sure they are as prepared as possible and have the resources available to make good decisions," says Schellenberg.

North Clackamas has devoted a great deal of time and effort to prepare aspiring administrators for the complexities of the principalship and to support new principals once they obtain their first position. "I think business has shown us," Schellenberg notes, "that a comprehensive orientation to the work expected to be performed is important, and it takes time and support. So we have taken a chapter out of the more effective business practices and said, 'If it makes sense for them to do it, it certainly makes sense for us'." After all, he points out, "we are dealing with a far more important product."

Preservice Induction Activities

North Clackamas administrators have designed and used a comprehensive set of induction strategies to orient new principals to their jobs. The district's induction process starts, however, long before a principal is hired. A set of carefully developed practica experiences is used by the district to orient aspiring administrators to the principal's role and to provide aspirants with valuable preservice leadership experiences. Some of these experiences include substituting for principals, internships, leadership training sessions, career ladder positions, and vice principalships at the secondary level.

Principal Designees. Although identifying a person to be in charge when the principal is out of the building is not an unusual practice in most school systems, what makes North Clackamas's process special is that the district releases principal designees from their regular teaching duties so they can work full-time as the principal's substitute. By so doing, the district gives principal hopefuls an opportunity for hands-on training experiences.

The district also brings principal designees together in a series of breakfast meetings during the year to reflect on their experiences, share

ideas, and solve problems. Gerald Scovil, director of elementary education and the central office administrator who directs these meetings, says, "I often will throw out hypothetical problems that principal designees might face and let them grapple with the problems and possible solutions." This kind of reflective activity is just the type of training that many observers interested in the improvement of preservice preparation believe needs to occur.

Program for Administrative Training. Another preservice induction strategy that North Clackamas began to use this fall is PAT—Program for Administrative Training. This program, modeled after Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits (STAR) developed in a neighboring district, David Douglas, is intended to increase the district's pool of potential principal candidates and to provide those interested in the principalship with practical, district-specific training that enhances the theoretical instruction about school administration provided in university training programs.

The training program includes nine afterwork sessions that North Clackamas teachers can take for college or district inservice credit. Training sessions focus on the following topics:

Session 1 - The Role of the Administrator in North Clackamas School District

Session 2 - The Role of the Administrator as Instructional Leader

Session 3 - The Role of the Administrator as Educational Program Coordinator

Session 4 - The Role of the Administrator as Disciplinarian

Session 5 - The Role of the Administrator as Personnel Manager

Session 6 - The Role of the Administrator as a Building Manager

Session 7 - The Role of the Administrator as Community Relations Specialist

Session 8 - The Role of the Administrator in Planning and Administration

Session 9 - The Role of the Administrator as First Year Rookie

With eight building principals eligible to retire during the next five years and the possibility of six of the seven central office administrators, it is vital that "we have a well-qualified and well-trained pool of candidates from which to choose," says Megan Walth, director of personnel services and coordinator of PAT. The principal designee program and PAT are not the only preservice experiences that the district uses to socialize aspirants to the important role of school principal. Internships and assistant principalships are other strategies used in North Clackamas.

Internships. A two-year internship, under the guidance of an excellent veteran principal, is a third step in North Clackamas's preservice induc-

tion process. According to Scovil, a successful candidate is placed in the position of principal at one of the district's small elementary schools for a full-time training opportunity. In this position, the prospective principal gets first-hand experiences in all the aspects of the principal's role, including leadership of the instructional staff, learning district-specific procedures, and participation as a member of the district's administrative team.

"I really learned what the principalship was all about from my intern experience," says Dave Larson, the district's first two-year intern. Larson, now a principal at Ardenwald Elementary, says that the internship not only gave him valuable experiences, but it also helped "orient me to district expectations and procedures." As a result, when Larson received his first "true" principalship, "I knew the thrust of the district, what they were looking for in instructional leadership, and how to get things done in the district."

The Secondary Vice-Principalship. At the secondary level in North Clackamas, the vice-principal position is another training ground for the principalship. According to James Lindsay (1985), the vice-principal in many schools is not appropriately socialized to the role of principal. Assistant principals are usually

> treated as single-facet administrators prepared, for instance, to be only a disciplinarian or only a director of activities. As a result, most principals learn only a few of the many job skills they need to be principals.

This is not the case in many North Clackamas secondary schools. According to Dean Winder, former vice-principal at Clackamas High School and the current principal, "I was fortunate to be an assistant under a principal who operated on a team approach. He gave me a variety of roles and projects that allowed me to get a good feel for all aspects of the principalship." As a result of varied experiences and being "privy" to most decisions in the school, the "transition to the principalship was smoother than it might have been," says Winder.

Besides internships and vice-principal positions, North Clackamas has many other career ladder positions that give prospective administrators leadership experiences. Some of these positions include staff development specialists and departmental chairs. In sum, the many preservice leadership opportunities that the district provides aspirants helps foster a good socialization process to the principal's role in North Clackamas. In fact, the district's process incorporates all three phases of induction—anticipatory, occupational, and organizational socialization—described in chapter 1. North Clackamas's induction process, therefore, does not end with preservice experiences. Instead, the district uses a variety of strategies during and after selection to continue the socialization process and postselection support of principals.

New Administrator Orientations

North Clackamas has developed a comprehensive orientation process to induct all new principals to the district. Although orientations are highly individualized—a program is designed for each new hiree—there are some common features in the initial phase of the district's principal induction process. Orientations begin during the recruitment and selection process and continue through school-specific and district orientations.

Recruitment and Selection. The district uses a sophisticated recruitment, screening, and selection process for hiring principals that gives all candidates a feel for the district's values, mission, and expectations for the principalship. Because new principals are selected from both within and outside the district, selection is an important part of the district's induction process. According to Scovil, "we definitely let candidates know, through our process, that we are looking for individuals who are forward looking. You can't be a maintainer in North Clackamas." Through a series of structured questions, "the interview covers creativity and what candidates think are the essential elements of leadership," Scovil says. During the interview, "we also talk about the particular school opening; the unique characteristics of the staff, students, and community; and the special needs of the school."

School Orientation. After a principal is selected, either Scovil or the deputy superintendent briefs the new principal in more depth on the special needs of the school, the challenges he or she will face, and the goals the district would like to see accomplished during the first year. According to Scovil, our most important expectation of a first-year principal is that he or she work at "understanding the people and the human dynamics within the school. We want them to find out what the school climate is like and the nuts and bolts of what makes their school unique."

To that end, new principals must be "good listeners and concentrate on the people side of the business," Scovil contends. Senior district officials, therefore, do not involve new principals in a variety of other district obligations, and they leave rookies in their buildings to give them the needed time to assess their new school and staff.

System-Specific Orientations. Another phase of the district's orientation process is a series of meetings on school system operations (technical procedures) and expectations. The director of personnel services, Walth, meets with each new administrator and covers the following district-specific procedures and expectations:

- Documents to be familiar with: Emergencies, collective bargaining agreements, classified handbooks, district policy manual, and discipline procedures

- Philosophy: Introduction to Clackamas management team and philosophy of team management

- Expectations: Dress and appearance, how to handle people, chain of command, and quick ways to get into trouble
- Personal Orientation for Administrators: Position description, organizattional structure, evaluations process, probationary status, salary and benefits, and work calendar

Directors of business, curriculum, special services, and physical plant also schedule sessions with each rookie to orient him or her to the specific procedures of each department. For example, the physical plant department schedules a tour of their facilities and introduces rookies to all supervisors. Included in this orientation are:

- how to initiate a work order
- how to do a service order
- what happens once an order is received and how people are dispatched
- how to do a vandalism report
- how to report phone disorders
- orientation to the district energy management program

Inservice for Beginning Principals

Besides orientations to school systems operations and technical procedures, North Clackamas also provides rookies with a variety of inservice opportunities to strengthen their leadership skills and expose them to experts from a variety of fields who work with principals on school-specific concerns. One of the workshops beginning principals go through is on personnel evaluation.

Administrative Workshop on Personnel Evaluation. Walth and Nancy Hungerford, an attorney specializing in personnel evaluation who the district retains, coteach two half-day training sessions for beginning administrators regarding the district's expectations and procedures for evaluation of classified and certificated staff. With quality instruction being one of the district's top priorities, new principals are given a thorough orientation to the evaluation process for both certificated and classified staff. Topics covered in the workshops include:

- setting the stage for evaluation
- evaluation or supervision
- certificated evaluation cycle
- certificated remedial process
- just cause and due process
- disciplinary process: Investigation, handling complaints, determination of appropriate penalty, oral reprimands and written reprimands, suspension and dismissal

- classified evaluation and remedial process

Supportive Consultants. The district also invests money in obtaining outstanding consultants to assist beginning principals exert effective leadership. During Dean Winder's first year as principal of Clackamas High, the district hired Robert McElroy, a private practitioner and former director of guidance at Lewis and Clark College, to work with Winder on a change process. According to Winder, "I moved into the principalship late in August and immediately hired two new assistant administrators. I was training two other administrators, trying to learn my new job at the same time, and dealing with a lot of change." McElroy helped Winder deal with all these changes and develop strategies for having a successful first year.

The district used Dan Duke, formerly head of educational administration at Lewis and Clark, to help principals formulate discipline plans for their schools. Beginning principal Dave Larson and a team of his teachers worked with Duke to design a discipline program for their school, Ardenwald Elementary. The district also contracted with Joseph Pascarelli and Betty Ward, two private consultants who are experts in the field of school improvement, to work in tandem with principals and a team of their teachers to assess various aspects of their schools' effectiveness and design school improvement plans. The districts' support of principals through hiring experts to assist them is extremely valuable, according to Larson and Winder.

Mentor Principal Program

An induction strategy that North Clackamas began in the 1987-88 school year to assist beginning principals is the Mentor Principal Program. An experienced North Clackamas principal is paired with a rookie administrator to help the beginner master district performance standards and become familiar with district rules, expectations, and procedures. Schellenberg says that he likes to use the skills of the district's administrators.

> We have a number of excellent administrators who have a lot of wisdom and good savvy to share with new administrators. When you have someone who is experienced and confident, it is also exciting for those people to be able to share on a one-to-one basis. I think the mentor program not only meets the needs of the new administrator, but it also gives a certain affirmation to the experienced administrator and lets us say we appreciate their work, have a lot of confidence in them, and need their help.

The North Clackamas Administrative Association Executive Board and principals' supervisors jointly select a pool of mentors from the district's ranks of veteran principals. Because the mentor plays an important role in assisting new principals, the district has developed a well-thought-out set of expectations and selection criteria for the position that includes the following elements:

Mentor Qualifications:

1. Experienced principal (at least four years in the position with recent building experience).
2. Has met or exceeds all of the principal's specific job functions.
3. Interested in participation.
4. Good communication skills.
5. Knowledge of the school, faculty, and attendance area.
6. Knowledge of level, i.e., elementary, junior high, senior high.
7. Creative and innovative.

Responsibilities:

1. Assist in the orientation of the principal with the school, community, school district, and professional groups, i.e., North Clackamas Administrative Association, North Clackamas Education Association, and Oregon School Employees Association.
2. Assist the principal with programs, policies, and procedures.
3. Review with the principal the principal's specific job functions.
4. Be on call to answer questions and give suggestions.
5. Assist the principal with professional growth opportunities.
6. Meet regularly with new principal.
7. Observe the principal in specific job functions and provide feedback.

Training:

The mentor will be included in the initial screening process of the candidates for the new position when possible. The mentor will meet with the supervisor to become acquainted with the new principal. The mentor will participate in training workshops.

Length of Assignment:

Assignment will begin with the screening of the candidates and continue through the first year of the professional development stage. Another assignment will not be made until all interested, qualified principals have had the opportunity to be a mentor.

Remuneration:

The daily salary rate will be paid for extra days worked as a mentor outside of the regular contract time. A half-day salary rate per month will be paid for performing mentor responsibilities during the regular contract time. If the mentor desires, with the supervisor approval, the mentor may have the option of compensatory time off, and/or the ability to attend professional

conferences or workshops with reimbursement equal to the above salary rates.

The district selected and assigned Chuck Hopman, principal of Sunnyside Elementary and a principal of twenty-four years, to mentor Dave Larson during the 1987-88 school year. The purpose of Hopman's role, as he views it, is to "help the new principals succeed and be good at what they do." To that end, Hopman contends that the mentor and mentee must develop a close working relationship that is built on trust. "I told Dave that if he has a question or thinks he might be in trouble to not hide it. Don't let ego get in the way." Hopman's goal was that Larson would use him as a sounding board and feel safe in confiding in him. Thus, Hopman and other district mentors do not evaluate rookies' performance, but instead play a supportive role.

Larson used Hopman's advice several times throughout his first year in the principal's chair. As Larson notes, "Chuck was always just a phone call away." Some of the issues on which Larson and Hopman worked are setting personal and professional goals for the year, holding the first faculty meeting of the year, dealing with a variety of personnel issues, evaluating teachers, and transferring students.

Bob Adrian, another veteran principal who was formerly principal of Milwaukie High and who now is principal of Rowe Junior High, was assigned to mentor Dean Winder, the new principal of Clackamas High. Echoing Hopman's perception of the mentor and mentee relationship, Adrian notes that the mentor and protegee must have a "high trust level" for the program to work. Adrian and Winder's working relationship grew out of enjoying each other socially outside of school.

For Winder, the district's formalized mentor program came a year late as he was appointed to the principalship during the 1986-87 school year, one year before the district began its mentor program. Winder notes, however, that he was already using Adrian and other experienced principals as a sounding board for various issues that he was facing during his rookie year.

The mentor program provides beginners with a system for informal advice, feedback, and collegial support. The district does use other methods, however, to let rookies know how well they are performing in their new roles.

Feedback on Performance

North Clackamas administrators have designed a variety of strategies to provide beginning principals with feedback on how they are doing. Feedback ranges from informal conferences with mentors and superiors to more formalized feedback such as collegial teams that provide insights on principals' teacher supervision and evaluation skills.

Collegial Teams. The district pairs principals in a sort of buddy system to provide each other with feedback on their teacher observation and

conferencing skills. Principals videotape teacher postobservation conferences and then meet with their peer partners to review the tape and obtain feedback on their performance. According to Larson, "The collegial teams have probably been the most helpful activity for me instructionally." The principals' supervisors also review these tapes and provide principals with feedback on their teacher supervision skills. "The side benefit," says Larson, "is that we all have a common language and the same database" from which to work.

Feedback from Superiors and Goal Setting. One area that the district has improved recently is the process by which principals set annual goals. Goals from the school board, curriculum department, and other school system offices "often came too late during the year for principals to set their goals in a timely manner," say Scovil. Now, the deputy superintendent coordinates a district committee for school improvement that collects and sets all the goals for the district in May. This committee is composed of one secondary principal, one middle school principal, three elementary principals, three teachers (one from each level), and the director of special education (the facilitator). Once the district goals are set, principals incorporate them into a personal set of goals that they design with their supervisor. Then during the school year, principal supervisors meet three times with each principal to discuss progress on goals and to give principals feedback on their performance.

Benefits of the Induction Process

North Clackamas's comprehensive induction process has several benefits. According to Scovil, "The process makes that first year for a principal much smoother. You don't see things interrupting the classroom." Instead, says Scovil, "you see principals who are able to quickly work with staff and be involved in school leadership." The comprehensive orientations to district technical procedures enable rookie principals to quickly master managerial activities and focus on instructional leadership. As a result, Walth notes that "we have people in place who do not look like rookies."

Another benefit is that the mentor program reduces the isolation that many administrators face as principals. In addition, veteran principals not only have an opportunity to share insights with rookies, but they also learn from the newcomers as well. Veteran principal Hopman says, "I will also run things by Dave [a rookie] to get his ideas on how to handle situations." Thus, there are two-way benefits for principals.

Testimony to the truth that investing in principals is an indicator of school system quality is the number of award-winning schools in North Clackamas. Three years in a row North Clackamas schools were acclaimed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Secondary Schools Recognition Award Program as part of the nation's 200 best secondary schools. In 1986 Rowe Junior High School, 1985 Rex Putnam High School, and 1984

Clackamas High School and McLoughlin Junior High were winners of the prestigious award. In addition, the Owen Sabin Occupational Skills Center was selected in 1985 as one of the outstanding secondary vocational centers in the state.

Perhaps North Clackamas's motto—"Educating for Tomorrow... Today"— could be rephrased to reflect the district's philosophy for inducting and supporting principals as well—"Educating principals for tomorrow... today."

Beaverton's Induction Process

Another large school system in Oregon that is developing a comprehensive induction system for principals is Beaverton Schools (1988-89 enrollment approximately 22,569 students in 35 schools). During the past few years, as a number of principals retired or left the district, Beaverton has trained, selected, and inducted many new principals. One way that the district has committed resources to the preservice induction process of principals is its "Administrative Assistant Program."

Administrative Assistants Gain Leadership Experience

In the 1986-87 school year, Beaverton administrators designed a new elementary career ladder and leadership position entitled "Elementary School Administrative Assistant." According to Mike Vermillion, assistant superintendent of personnel, the administrative assistant program serves two purposes: (1) to provide assistance to principals in large elementary schools and (2) to provide aspiring principals with many valuable leadership experiences before they assume their first principalship.

Teachers selected as assistants must possess a principal certificate, but they remain on the teacher's salary schedule with an extended contract. The assistantship is a two-year position in which candidates work full time under the supervision and guidance of a successful veteran principal. The district appointed two assistants during the 1987-88 school year, and four individuals are serving in the role during the 1988-89 school year. The activities in which administrative assistants are involved include:

1. Student Management Responsibilities:
   a. Assist with the monitoring and supervision of students in hallways, playgrounds, and loading and unloading of buses.
   b. Assist with the discipline of students.
   c. Assist staff in dealing with classroom management issues.
   d. Assist with students who have emotional and/or discipline problems that require additional attention.
2. Staff Development and Personnel Responsibilities:

a. Assist in the planning and implementing of staff development activities.
b. Assist in the selection of staff.
c. Assist in the evaluation and supervision of certified and classified staff.
d. Assist in monitoring substitutes and student teachers.

3. Curriculum and Instruction Responsibilities:
   a. Assist in providing recommendations relative to districtwide programs.
   b. Assist with selection, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum programs within the school.
   c. Assist in monitoring districtwide programs to ensure continuity and adherence to the program.
   d. Assist as a direct resource to teachers in identifying appropriate teaching strategies that will address the unique learning styles of students.

4. Communication Responsibilities:
   a. Assist in supporting the public relations and communication efforts directed toward all audiences of the school and district through both verbal and written communications.
   b. Assist with committee responsibilities, e.g., local school committees, PTA's, volunteers and outside agencies.
   c. Assist by supervising activities in the school business partnership.

5. Business Management Responsibilities:
   a. Assist in developing the school budget.
   b. Assist in the supervision and monitoring of expenditures from the school budget.
   c. Assist in monitoring consumable, textbook, library, and capital inventories.
   d. Assist in directing the financial and bookkeeping system within the school.
   e. Assist in developing school utilization schedules.
   f. Assist in developing schedules for teachers that provide the required duty-free lunch and planning time.
   g. Assist with the monitoring and supervision of school maintenance activities.

Within this district outline of the position, supervising principals and protegees design a more specific job responsibility statement that is applicable to a particular school. Mike Smith, principal of Errol Hassell Elementary and a veteran principal in Beaverton, has supervised three administrative assistants. Smith and Jeanne Sabbe, his most recent assistant and the new principal of Elmonica Elementary in Beaverton, developed a detailed list of responsibilities that met both Smith's and Sabbe's needs.

Smith reports that he was looking for an assistant who could "hit the

ground running." Sabbe, on the other hand, not only viewed the role as an assistant for Smith, but she also saw it as an opportunity to gain valuable training experiences as well. Sabbe had held a variety of career ladder positions in Beaverton that gave her experience in evaluating staff and other leadership activities; however, she felt there were still "holes" in her principal preparation and the position was an excellent vehicle to fill those gaps while under the mentorship of an experienced principal.

Working side by side with Smith was a "great opportunity to see how a successful principal handles various situations. Mike was a great role model for me," says Sabbe. In addition, "we would brainstorm ideas on how to handle situations," Sabbe notes, "and then I got to see it happen." Smith and Sabbe would often meet after various events to reflect on both of their actions. These reflective sessions were a great source of feedback for both Sabbe and Smith on their performance and actions. "Many of the school-related activities were administered together," says Smith, "and then we would debrief afterwards." Smith said he would give Sabbe feedback, and "I got a lot of constructive feedback" from her as well.

Judy Taccogna, principal of McKinley Elementary and Smith's first assistant, says that the full-time assistantship was also very helpful for an aspirant to see how a principal uses his or her resources effectively. "Mike was particularly adept at budgeting, and he taught me how to convert resources in one area to be productive in another," Taccogna reports. After Taccogna received her first principalship in Beaverton, she again called on Smith to assist her with the budgeting process for her new school.

Sabbe and Taccogna both agree that their assistantships, along with other preservice training experiences, contributed to their understanding of district expectations and procedures as well as helping them to quickly begin leading their schools. Preservice leadership experiences are, however, not the only way that the district inducts individuals to the important role of school principal; postselection orientations are also part of Beaverton's induction process.

Orientation to the District

Once principals are selected, the district does not leave them totally alone to run their schools. Because Beaverton is a large school system, the possibility exists for new principals to become easily overwhelmed by a complicated bureaucracy. According to Steve Lynch, director of elementary schools, "We have tried to make our organization flatter." Lynch notes that the district schedules a series of meetings between rookies and key central office administrators where senior officials explain their roles and departments and get to know new principals on a personal basis.

Central office administrators "try to build an open and candid working relationship with new principals," Lynch notes, "and we let principals know that we operate on a team approach. Through collaborating on decisions, we

can assist principals in making informed decisions that help them have a quality start." Taccogna says that the series of orientation sessions with central office cabinet members helped her "solidify the big picture" and see how her role fit into the district's mission.

New principals also meet with their supervisor one hour before each of the bimonthly principal meetings. During the meetings, central office administrators give rookies detailed instruction on various aspects of their jobs such as teacher evaluations and budgeting. Orientations, therefore, do not occur all at once, but instead are spread out over the year so as not to overload rookie administrators. As Vermillion notes, "It is important to schedule orientations when it is timely and important for the principals to fulfill their various job responsibilities."

Orientation to the School

Another induction strategy that the district uses to orient new principals is the scheduling of several meetings between the outgoing principal of a school and the new principal. Vermillion states that the district attempts to complete its selection of principals early in May, preceding a principal's first year. By so doing, "the outgoing principal has time to orient the new principal to the school, staff, parents, and students." Taccogna said that she and the former principal of McKinley shared details about specific teacher and student situations during these orientation sessions.

Lynch also meets with each school's staff and local school committee prior to the interview and selection of a principal to gain their insights on "what they would like to see continue and what areas need to be improved." Then, he sits down with the new principal and shares the staff's and school committee's insights. The personnel office also meets with new principals and gives them background on each staff member, on staff members who are at risk, and on issues that the personnel department knows the new principal must address. By providing this type of detailed orientation, "the district office helps provide continuity to the program," Vermillion says.

Support and Networking for Beginners

Besides orientations, the district uses other methods to support new principals. Giving beginners access to their superiors is one strategy that the district uses. One of Lynch's top priorities is assisting principals, and, as Sabbe found, "he is readily accessible and he visits me regularly." Taccogna has also used Lynch as a sounding board and had him role play answers to difficult situations that she faced. "I would call Steve and ask him how he would actually respond to a situation. Then, I took notes like mad as he talked and used what I felt would match my management style,"

says Taccogna. This type of support and advice reduces the isolation that beginners often experience and is extremely useful in helping rookies solve problems.

A networking system among principals is another supportive activity for newcomers. According to Taccogna, many elementary principals have made it a practice to go out to lunch after each principal meeting. At these lunches, "our conversations usually turn to sharing school-specific situations we are facing" and suggesting ideas to solve those situations. This type of collegial support also extends into various social events such as skiing trips where principals relax, play together, and continue their discussions about school leadership issues. As Lynch notes, these kind of networking opportunities make principals feel more "collaborative, versus competitive."

Induction Benefits

Because of Beaverton's size, reputation, and attractive suburban location, the district attracts and selects many experienced principals. For this reason, Beaverton teachers who want to move into a principal position must be very competitive to land a job. According to Lynch, one benefit of Beaverton's preservice leadership experiences is that prospective administrators are better able to "position themselves for a school principalship."

Another benefit of Beaverton's induction process is that the district better ensures that new principals can "do more, faster, and better," says Lynch. It also helps new principals "to be busy about the types of things principals should be doing," says Lynch, "and teaches them how to prioritize their efforts." Vermillion and Lynch believe that the induction process Beaverton uses helps newcomers become proficient at both the operational and the instructional sides of a principal's job.

Now that the district has hired and inducted a number of new principals during recent years, Lynch and Vermillion plan to seek the help of newcomers to assess its induction process. New principals, along with veteran principals, will undoubtedly suggest further improvements to a system that is already starting to meet the needs of beginning principals.

Larger school systems, such as Beaverton and North Clackamas, have a number of veteran administrators from which to draw on to support new principals. What about medium to smaller size school districts? How can they provide the necessary induction support to ensure a new principal's success? As will be seen in the next chapter, district size does not deter a school system from providing valuable postselection support for beginning principals.

Chapter 5

Induction Programs in Medium and Small School Systems

> In a small district, you have the opportunity to make the induction of new principals a very personalized process. (Gail Perkins, superintendent of Estacada School District)
>
> Having someone who is sort of an outsider or neutral party to serve as a confidential mentor for a new principal has many advantages. (Tony Palermini, superintendent of David Douglas School District)

The insights of these superintendents reflect a commitment to assisting very important members of their leadership team—principals. Although David Douglas and Estacada schools use somewhat different strategies to induct principals, their goal is the same—getting beginning principals off to a good start and helping them succeed during their important first year in the principal's chair.

This chapter examines David Douglas School District's use of a retired principal to assist rookies and Estacada School District's development of an induction process in a rural school system. In addition, the chapter describes a peer-assisted leadership activity that the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory coordinated between a new principal in Sandy Schools and an Estacada principal. First, we look at the mentor principal program in the David Douglas School District.

David Douglas's Mentor Program

David Douglas Schools (1988-89 enrollment approximately 6,000 students in 11 schools) uses a variety of preservice leadership training strategies

to socialize prospective administrators to the role of school principal. The district's STAR program (Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits), featured in the May 1988 OSSC Bulletin, is one such activity. Here our attention is on a unique method that David Douglas uses to support beginning principals.

Anticipating the challenge of inducting many new principals, Superintendent Tony Palermini initiated a mentor-principal program in 1984. The district has hired five new principals since 1984 and anticipates several more retirements during the next one to three years, according to Assistant Superintendent Ron Russell.

To address the induction needs of new principals, Palermini contracted with Gene Cook, who retired after twenty-five years of service in David Douglas schools, to mentor beginning principals. "It seemed to me," says Palermini, "that mentoring a new principal is the kind of thing that those of us in education have talked about for many years. That is, having someone who is sort of an outsider or neutral party to serve as a mentor to a beginner." Palermini notes that David Douglas's program is nothing more than the "teacher-mentor program as applied to the building principal." He believes, however, that it is "even more crucial for a building principal to have someone who is a confidential helper."

Why Use a Retired Principal to Mentor?

For many beginners, says Palermini, ego may get in the way, and the "young person may not want to ask certain questions of their colleagues or superiors when they feel that they are the only person who doesn't know the answer. Some beginners may, therefore, try to "camouflage their shortcomings or lack of knowledge." Palermini believes that rookie principals will feel more free to ask questions if they have a mentor who is slightly removed from the district. Thus, he uses Cook, who was a very successful principal in David Douglas, to act as a confidential advisor for new principals and to develop a trusting relationship with newcomers.

Palermini's hunch was correct. According to Harriet Jackson, principal of West Powellhurst Elementary and Cook's first mentee, "I liked the fact that Gene was slightly detached from the district. It gave me a greater sense of freedom to reveal my thoughts and feelings." The trust factor, says Cook, is extremely important for the success of a mentor-mentee relationship.

Jackson notes that when Cook first met with her, he said, "I am here to help you, and whatever we say is confidential. I don't report to anybody, and I am not part of your evaluation process. Thus, whatever you and I say is between the two of us." To Jackson, his words and subsequent actions were the start of a warm and trusting relationship that has continued over the past four years.

Another advantage of using a retired principal is that "he can spend a

full day in a building each week," says Assistant Superintendent Russell. "The district can hardly afford to send me into a building for a whole day each week along with the many other responsibilities of my position." Thus, Cook gets to see the whole process of how a rookie is running his or her school from bus loading to teacher evaluations to recess. By spending a significant amount of time with the beginner, "Cook helps the principal get up to speed on the kinds of things that he or she should master quickly and that a new principal needs to get into his or her mental process," Russell notes.

Activities of the Mentor and New Principal

Cook begins work with the new principal in the summer before the school year begins and then averages one full day per week in assisting the newcomer throughout the first year on the job. Cook starts with the basics such as putting together various building schedules, checking in supplies, and listing things a principal needs to cover in the first faculty meeting.

Because Cook was very familiar with many routine events in David Douglas that a new principal must address, he would "sit down with me as the year progressed and say, 'Harriet, this is something you will be facing in the near future'," says Jackson. During the year, Cook and Jackson worked on staffing, building budget, teacher evaluations, parent-teacher relationships, and many other basic aspects of a principal's job. At each weekly meeting, Cook would "see what my level of understanding was on an upcoming event," says Jackson, "and he then would clarify or add to my perceptions. He kept me from falling into pot holes throughout my first-year experience."

Jackson looked forward to her weekly visitation from Cook and usually had two or three items that she wanted to discuss. "Many times Harriet may have already handled a problem," Cook notes, "but she wanted to talk about the situation to see if there might have been another way to handle it." Cook views his role as giving the rookie a variety of options about how to handle various issues, as opposed to saying this is the way you have to do it. As Jackson put it, "Gene was not trying to make me into another Gene Cook." Instead, by giving me options, "I was free to choose and develop my own leadership style."

Benefits of the Mentor Relationship

"When you are coming out of the classroom into the principalship, it can be very lonely," says Jackson. "Gene was the person from whom I got support." Thus, David Douglas's mentor program reduces newcomers' isolation and prevents the district from leaving new principals alone to learn district procedures and solve problems in isolation from a helpful colleague.

Another advantage of using a mentor is helping rookies avoid costly

mistakes. By forecasting routine events for the rookie principal, Cook helped Jackson avoid many pitfalls during her first year. "If I had not had Gene, I would have had to use the 'trial and error method' and undoubtedly would have made a lot more mistakes," says Jackson. Having a person who is slightly removed from the district's administrative ranks is another advantage of David Douglas's system. The program helps foster a confidential and trusting relationship between the veteran and beginner. As a result of this trust, the rookie opens up and asks many important questions that he or she may be reluctant to discuss with other colleagues. As Palermini suggests, when you're talking to Gene Cook, "there are no dumb questions."

Finally, Cook's experience in the district and his style of presenting alternative ways to handle various situations allow new principals to gain a needed understanding of the unwritten history behind many district rules and procedures so that they can make informed choices. In other words, the mentor ushers new principals into their role and allows them to have the necessary time, information, and advice to exert informed leadership.

Although David Douglas School District does not have as many students or staff as Beaverton or North Clackamas, it is still large enough to support a staff development department that guides new principals toward a variety of innovative techniques and practices in educational administration that support their continued professional development. What about a small or rural district that does not have the resources larger systems have? What can they do to assist beginners? Next, we look at the induction process that the Estacada School District uses to assist new principals.

Estacada's Personalized Induction Process

Estacada School District (1988-89 enrollment approximately 2,200 students in 5 schools) is located in the foothills of Mt. Hood, east of Portland. According to outgoing Superintendent Gail Perkins, the district's induction process has been "one of the strengths of our district." Perkins contends that the rural district has been an "excellent training grounds for new principals," because many principals have used the district as a stepping stone to administrative positions in larger school systems. Thus, Perkins has faced the challenge of inducting five new principals over the past seven years.

Faced with such turnover, Perkins believes the most important task of inducting principals in Estacada is to develop a collaborative or teamwork approach to school leadership. She notes that the induction system is the means quickly to develop a sense of commitment to the district's mission—"Educating Youth to Their Full Potential"—among new principals. Therefore, she involves many members of the administrative team in the recruitment, screening, and selection of new principals. And, to quickly give

candidates a sense of the district's mission and values, selectors ask candidates as part of the interview process to "describe what they believe 'Educating Youth to Their Full Potential' would look like."

Personalizing the Induction of Beginners

Once the selection process is completed, the district immediately assigns an experienced administrator to assist the beginner. Perkins and the experienced administrator first sit down and go over a list of areas that a newcomer needs to know in order to have a good start. They also break the induction activities into segments to spread out the orientation process over the new principal's first year.

Perkins then schedules a two-day meeting at her home where the entire administrative team gets away from district obligations so they can plan the year, set goals, and develop a close working relationship with new principals. According to Perkins, "We not only meet to discuss school issues, but we also plan social events where newcomers are able get to know veteran administrators on a personal basis." Team building activities and social get togethers continue throughout the school year with administrators attending such events as "The Last Laugh," a Portland comedy club.

Orientations to District and School Procedures

To orient newcomers to district procedures, Perkins and her administrative team have developed a detailed, month-by-month list of items that new principals need to know and address to successfully fulfill their job responsibilities. The experienced administrator whom Perkins assigns to assist the rookie meets with the newcomer on a weekly basis during the year to discuss each month's list of orientation activities. According to Scott Baker, a new principal in Estacada during the 1986-87 school year and currently a principal in Tigard, veteran Principal George Martin was his mentor. "He touched based with me," says Baker, "two or three times a day at first." In addition, because the district is small, "it was real family like, and it was not difficult to get information that I needed," Baker says.

The monthly orientation procedures that a veteran administrator covers with the rookie are broken into four areas each month: Students, Staff, Parent/Community, and District. Examples of two areas for the months of August and November are as follows:

August - Students:

1. Review prescriptive materials and strategies for students.
2. Identify prescriptive materials and strategies by management system concept objectives.
3. Review class lists - adjust for numbers.

4. Prepare students' and parents' informational packets.
5. Sort cumulative records by class.
6. Organize and inventory book room.
7. Plan student newsletters and opening of year packets.
8. Have student council materials printed.
9. Send letters with students - opening schedules and bus schedules.
10. Plot general developmental and achievement level of students.
11. Make room surveys to be sure of student enrollment.
12. Review latest research on student behavior.

November - District:

1. Prepare for safety committee meeting.
2. Review all budgets.
3. Plan school presentations promoting excellence in education.
4. Prepare for board meetings.
5. Prepare for cabinet meetings.
6. List repairs and operations needed for building and grounds during winter vacation.
7. Project enrollment for coming year and class size.
8. Veterans Day - holiday.
9. Thanksgiving Day and day after - holidays/noncontract.

This calendar of orientation items continues for each month of the school year in each of the four areas. In addition to these orientation procedures, Perkins says that "we foster the concept that it is okay to call three or four times a day to get answers to questions and that it is okay to not know everything." To encourage openness, Perkins will call new principals and say, for example, "I am working on a situation with a parent and this is the way I think I am going to handle it. What do you think?" She does this not only to model that it is an accepted practice to ask for help, but also because "superintendents may not have a better answer than a principal," says Perkins. Thus, she uses principals and other members of the team as her "confidants."

Guiding Rookies into Innovation

Although Estacada does not have a staff development department, this fact does not prevent the district from exposing new principals to innovative practices in school administration. Perkins notes that when the district hires a new principal, "we immediately go into training with principals." For example, the district employed Denny Westover, an expert in clinical supervision, to instruct principals on innovative teacher supervision techniques. Perkins also has each new principal meet with an attorney specializing in plans of assistance for teachers.

In addition to these inservice opportunities, the district supports principals' involvement in leadership training activities developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL). Scott Baker

participated in a peer-assisted leadership training program for instructional improvement sponsored by NWREL, and the activities of Baker and his peer partner, Mary Smith from Sandy Schools, are described in the last section of this chapter. Perkins views such leadership training as an excellent opportunity for "networking" and bringing innovative ideas back to Estacada.

Merits of Planned Induction and Team Building

According to Perkins, "I think beginners do a much better job because of our personalized induction process. It helps them to quickly get at issues, get them on the table, and get them solved." She also believes that the team approach to orienting new administrators helps rookies understand the district mission and values and helps build a sense of team camaraderie. "I don't think that any school district will succeed," says Perkins, "unless you have a solid administrative team who supports each other's efforts."

As a result of Estacada's personalized induction approach, principals have been supported by Perkins and other colleagues during their first year and are not left alone to learn district procedures and solve school-specific issues. Baker affirms that what the district did was very beneficial. The district's commitment to principals also puts them in contact with helpful colleagues outside of Estacada.

In the next section, we look at how a NWREL program brought two new rural principals together to support each other's leadership efforts.

NWREL Assists Principals

During the 1987-88 school year, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) piloted a new professional development program for principals in cooperation with the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators. The program—Leadership for Excellence (LFE)—is designed to "improve the instructional leadership skills of principals so that they may foster school improvement and high levels of student achievement," according to a NWREL program description. Robert Blum, director of the school improvement program for NWREL, says, "I think one of the most important things about Leadership for Excellence is that it is one of the few programs around that helps both new and experienced principals with their instructional leadership role."

Blum believes that LFE is particulary important for new principals in assisting them to get off on the right foot in relation to instructional leadership. "If a new principal starts out by doing some instructional leadership along with more general leadership activities and managing a building," says Blum, "they are more likely to continue that pattern than if they put it off till later or until they got their feet on the ground."

Because instructional leadership is, in fact, "not the focus of most

graduate programs in the preparation of principals," Blum notes, "it is also important that as an inductee gets going they have some kind of peer support." Thus, the LFE program not only presents a synthesis of research on instructional leadership to participants and trains principals in instructional leadership techniques, but the program also lets principals practice what they have learned with a peer partner. Principal partners observe each other and provide feedback concerning their implementation of ideas taught in NWREL workshop sessions.

LFE Strand Content

Leadership for Excellence builds principals' knowledge and skills through a year-long series of workshops in each of five content strands, from which participants choose one strand on which to concentrate their efforts during the year. The five strands are as follows:

1. *Vision Building*

   This strand teaches participants to state their vision in clear, concrete terms; examine and understand their own personal vision, beliefs, and expectations with regards to programs of education; and engage their entire staff in a similar process of developing a shared vision for the future of their schools.

2. *School Climate and Culture*

   In this strand, participants learn about school culture and climate factors and the differences between them in more and less effective schools. They receive a variety of tools and approaches to assess school culture and climate and then gain practical experience by conducting an assessment in and planning for improvement in their own schools.

3. *Improvement of Instruction*

   Participants in this strand learn how to use collegial learning, peer assistance, and schoolwide staff development to engage their staffs in improving instruction activities; procedures for using video as a tool for improving instruction; and peer assistance techniques that have been shown to lead to improvements in teacher behavior.

4. *Curriculum Implementation*

   This strand helps participants to examine the components of a comprehensive curriculum improvement cycle and determine their role in the process and shows participants how to work with their staffs and departments to clearly define priority objectives and instructional time lines and how to monitor the appropriate use of instructional strategies and methods.

5. *Monitoring Student Progress*

This final strand teaches participants to identify indicators of and procedures for monitoring student performance; how to create guidelines with staff for the use of data on student outcomes, noting advantages and disadvantages and precautions that must be taken; instructs participants on how to collect and report information on student performance to develop a school profile which displays data in a written account; and helps participant learn how to use a database to meet school goals through consensus building.

Blum notes that the beauty of the program is that it has "a broad enough base of content so that principals can size up their own situations and go with the area that best suits their needs." Workshop presentations are only one part of the program, however. Practicing what they learn, collegial group sharing and problem-solving, and Peer-Assisted Leadership (PAL) are other important elements of LFE.

Peer-Assisted Leadership

NWREL adapted, as part of its Leadership for Excellence program, the PAL process that the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development initiated in 1983. In this part of LFE, principals are paired up to shadow each other in their individual schools.

Scott Baker, a second-year principal at River Mill Elementary in Estacada; Mary Smith, who was also in her second year at Kelso Elementary in Sandy Elementary School District; and Bettianne Goetz, a thirteen-year veteran from the Reynolds School District, formed a peer trio to shadow one another during the 1987-88 school year. These principals were part of the "Improvement of Instruction" strand of LFE. Both Baker and Smith said they were looking for specific ideas, support, and help in improving instruction in their schools. Baker notes that when he was hired, "I got my marching orders and a mission to improve instruction in the building." Thus, he chose the instructional improvement strand, in particular, to gain ideas for "how to team build and work on instructional improvement with a somewhat anti-administrative staff."

Smith, a veteran teacher in the Sandy Elementary School District prior to her appointment as principal, was also looking for help in becoming an effective instructional leader. From her work in a doctoral program in educational administration at Portland State University, "I realized the importance of strong instructional leadership in a school, but I wasn't sure that I had seen it throughout my years as a teacher."

Smith and Baker observed each other in their schools a number of times during the 1987-88 school year. Each administrator took detailed notes as they observed each other going about their daily activities. During one observation, Baker notes, "Mary observed me working with a building

support team." In a debriefing session after this meeting, "the feedback Mary gave me was that I was warm, friendly, and positive. Thus, I got lots of perks."

Baker adds, however, that Smith also observed that "I was a talker and I would out talk the teachers." Because Baker believes that it is very important for an administrator to be a good listener, he set a personal goal to improve his listening skills. "We made sure," says Baker, "that when Mary came back she would zero in on my listening skills. Of course, when she did come back, I was primed and I really worked on listening." As a result, Baker improved this important aspect of his leadership behavior.

Smith, in turn, also got lots of feedback and good ideas from Baker. She notes that Baker was skilled in Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP) and clinical supervision, and she used his expertise to help improve her staff. Many of Smith's staff members had not been to school or inservice sessions in many years. As a result, many teachers had never heard of ITIP, cooperative learning, or effective schools research. Smith says that Baker "gave me a number of good ideas about how to expose staff to recent innovations in teaching and education." Thus, with Baker's advice, she focused every other faculty meeting on staff development. "We started out with effective schools research," says Smith, and then focused on many other effective school practices.

The PAL process also helped Smith reflect on her words and actions. In recalling one incident that Baker observed, Smith said that "a teacher came to me and asked if he could leave a few minutes early each day to go jogging. I said, 'Sure,' as long as he made up the time, because we had been talking about staff wellness." Reading Smith's words back to her afterwards, Baker asked whether she lets all teachers leave early. "He said it in a nonjudgmental way, but it got me to thinking about the ramifications of letting a teacher go early on a regular basis." As it turned out, "the teacher did it for a week and then stopped jogging," says Smith. Nevertheless, Baker's observation helped Smith to examine her actions and to become more aware of the long-term implications of what she says and does.

Benefits of LFE and Peer-Assisted Support

The Leadership for Excellence Program and the peer-assisted or collegial support component of the program have several benefits for new principals, especially in rural or small school systems. According to Lee Chapman, superintendent of Sandy Elementary School District and Smith's supervisor, the program provides guidance, help, and exposure to innovative practices that a small district may not be able to provide inhouse. In addition, Chapman notes, "it is a real confidence builder for a new principal."

Smith concurs with her boss. "It certainly filled an inservice gap for

me that a small district like ours is not able to provide." Smith notes that is important, however, also to have someone in the district to help a new principal on district-specific procedures during the principal's first year. "My in-district mentor was my former principal, and he really helped me learn district-specific procedures," says Smith. She also believes that it is helpful to have someone who is removed from the district to assist a new principal.

Baker echoes Smith's feelings about having an outsider to act as a confidential supporter whom a principal can call. "I could say anything to Mary, and I knew it was safe. I wouldn't always take that kind of risk in my own district." In fact, says Baker, probably the

> most important benefit is that we have become best friends. I can call her and say you wouldn't believe what just happened. How would you handle it? Have you got any ideas? And has anyone ever done this in your building? Or I will just call and say this has been a really tough day and can you listen. I am not looking for an answer, but I can't say this to anyone else.

Listening to Smith and Baker, it is obvious that the NWREL program has had a significant side benefit—fostering a professional relationship between two new principals that will continue for many years. If nothing else, maybe the most important benefit for these principals is that they are interested in continually improving their leadership efforts, are willing to engage in reflective activities concerning their actions, and are open to collegial feedback regarding their leadership.

Other Induction Efforts

Forward-looking school districts and NWREL are not the only institutions that are attempting to provide better induction support for principals. The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) is also recognizing the need for providing assistance to beginning principals. During the 1987-88 school year, the Oregon Association of Elementary Principals, a wing of COSA, piloted a principal "advocacy" program, according to COSA Associate Executive Director Wayne Robbins. In this program, experienced and beginning principals are paired so that the veteran can provide support and postselection guidance to the new principal. Because of the program's success, COSA is also initiating advocacy programs for secondary principals, central office administrators, and new superintendents.

Individual school districts, however, are the key to effective induction of principals. As we have seen from the examples of Oregon districts recorded in these pages, inducting new principals to their important leadership role is an activity that districts cannot afford to

leave to chance or take lightly. Instead, it is a process that districts should view as a top priority. Now what remains for us to do is to summarize some of the key findings in the form of recommendations for districts that want to improve their induction process for beginning principals.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

> Too often, principals are tossed into the job without sufficient support from their superiors. Some, in fact, find that their performance is judged according to how little they bother the central office. Good superintendents, however, ensure that new principals are aware of the values, beliefs, and norms of the communities where they are assigned, and that they share the district's or supervisory body's aims and goals. Effective superiors, therefore, provide the guidance and technical support from experienced peers that will help new principals adjust and succeed. (U.S. Department of Education 1987)

Although the search for a principal ends when he or she is hired, the socialization process is far from over. Selection is only half the answer; the other half is helping the beginner succeed and grow in the job after he or she is hired. Well-organized postselection activities, including orientations, professional development, opportunities for networking, and on-the-job assistance from experienced administrators, are more likely to help the newly hired principal succeed.

The practices of Oregon schools and institutions recorded in these pages provide varied examples of how to induct beginning principals who, in turn, quickly begin the leadership process of building excellent schools. From these exemplary practices and from the contemporary research literature, we have seen that the following strategies characterize a successful induction program for principals. Administrators and school boards can assess the status of their principal induction methods by determining whether these strategies are absent or present in their districts.

1. Develop preservice induction activities. As a beginning, school districts can design a variety of preservice leadership experiences for those individuals who show promise for and interest in a school principal position. A district training program, *full-time* internships, and the

assignment of teachers to various leadership roles are appropriate ways to socialize teachers to the important dimensions of a principal's leadership role. Such a system can also provide districts with a means to increase their pool of qualified principal applicants.

2. Develop sophisticated selection techniques. The process of recruiting and selecting principals is another means for districts to socialize prospective administrators to the mission, values, and goals of a district and the expectations for the principalship in a school system. By developing a well-thought-out set of recruitment and selection techniques, districts are able not only to expose candidates to district and community values, but to develop within the successful candidate a sense of organizational mission and personal efficacy.

3. Orient beginning principals. Districts should provide newly hired principals with a comprehensive orientation to district technical procedures. By helping beginning principals quickly master district-specific procedures, school officials can free up time for new principals to focus more energy on instructional leadership issues. Scheduled orientations with the business, transportation, maintenance, public relations, personnel, curriculum, and other important school system offices should all be included as part of a comprehensive orientation program that is spread out over a new principal's first year on the job.

Personnel responsible for each area should provide newcomers with specific details that will help them learn the procedures and expectations of the district. Simply handing new hirees the keys to the building, vague job descriptions, district policy handbooks, curriculum guides, and collective bargaining agreements is an ineffective orientation strategy. Without the unwritten histories and rationale behind such policies and requirements, beginning principals will not know what to do, what is most and least important, what procedures are open to change or challenge, and why certain procedures are necessary. Although central office administrators should play an important role in orienting beginning principals, experienced principals are probably the most valuable resource for orienting new hirees.

4. Institute a mentor system. School districts should pair *successful* veteran principals with rookies in a sort of "buddy system" to help newcomers learn the "informal ropes" of a district. A mentor system can help reduce the isolation that many beginning principals experience, and it lets successful veteran principals give newcomers a needed understanding of the subtle signs, signals, and norms of a district.

A mentor principal system should be instituted with caution, however. Unless mentors are carefully chosen and trained, they may squelch fresh innovations and new ideas that beginning principals bring to the school system. Untrained mentors may simply pass on ineffective practices to new principals, perpetuating traditional processes and norms that may need to be changed. Effective mentors do not tell beginning principals what they

should do, but instead guide newcomers so that they are able to make their own decisions, based on a thorough understanding of the potential consequences of their choices.

5. Facilitate reflective activities. Districts should encourage, or even require, that beginning principals and successful veterans from within or outside district ranks observe each other to reduce newcomer isolation and to improve their work through a process of peer support and observation. Such an activity should not only include time to observe, but time for reflective analysis between participants.

Districts should also bring together beginning principals in reflective seminars with innovative administrators to discuss beginners' experiences, to offer suggestions for handling specific problems, and to expose newcomers to innovative practices. Districts that do not have a sufficient number of beginning principals to create such peer interaction can enter into cooperative arrangements with other districts.

6. Develop a plan for professional growth. If beginning principals are to continue to develop leadership skills and grow professionally, districts must assess newcomers' general leadership strengths and weaknesses as well as their skills and knowledge regarding district-specific priorities. Superiors, colleagues, and beginners should all be involved in assessing a newcomer's needs and then help the beginner develop a plan for growth that includes specific learning objectives, activities to help in the development process, an implementation timeline, and an evaluation plan.

7. Structure beginners' workload. Beginning principals need a great deal of time in their buildings to develop productive working relationships with staff, students, and parents and to assess various aspects of their schools' programs and operations. Hence, senior administrators must protect beginners from activities that require them to divert energy away from learning about their school. For example, districts should not immerse newly hired principals in a variety of district projects and committees. Such a practice only adds to the complexities of learning the system. Veteran principals often complain about being pulled out of their buildings to attend meetings called by the district office; for newcomers, such a practice can be even more detrimental.

8. Give beginning principals feedback. Districts should develop a system whereby beginning principals are provided with specific and constructive feedback on their performance. Although principals' supervisors can provide this type of feedback, it requires a great deal of time observing rookies and working with them. In addition to evaluation by superiors, many educators recommend a collegial supervisory model, such as Peer-Assisted Leadership, to provide principals with feedback.

The principalship is probably the single most powerful force for improving school effectiveness and for achieving excellence in education. The familiar adage, "so goes the principal, so goes the school," is on the mark in characterizing the importance of a principal's leadership. Although

better preparation, selection, and induction of school leaders are not the complete remedy for educational problems, they offer an important beginning.

As we have seen, getting an outstanding principal does not end with selection. School districts must also develop a comprehensive induction program for supporting new hirees. If they don't, even the "best" principals will never achieve their full potential, and they may even wither on the vine. Thus, supporting beginning principals is a key for achieving excellence in education.

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